

Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



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ASSEMBLYMAN KORETZ LAUDS MASSACHUSETTS MARRIAGE RULING

(Sacramento) Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) today praised the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in Goodridge vs. Department of Public Health recognizing that gay and lesbian couples have the legal right to marry.

“The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court today rightly recognized that government has no legitimate interest in denying the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage to lesbian and gay couples and their children. My hope is that the Massachusetts Legislature will quickly enact legislation granting full rights of civil marriage to gay families so that we can begin the long process of overturning the federal Defense of Marriage Act and similar state laws including California’s Proposition 22,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

The Massachusetts court gave the legislature 180 days “to take such action as it may deem appropriate in light of this opinion.” The Supreme Judicial Court is the ultimate authority on the Massachusetts State Constitution and the legislature does not have the option to overturn the decision. A state constitutional amendment must be approved by voters and, under state regulations, could not qualify for the ballot until 2006.

“Throughout history, marriage laws have been modified to reflect changing values regarding the role of women, property, and divorce. Today we are witnessing a continuation of this process. Civil marriage has been distinct from religious marriage since the founding of this nation. That some religions do not recognize lesbian and gay marriages is irrelevant when it comes to how secular government grants rights and responsibilities to its citizens,” Koretz said.

“Today there is hope that the ugly discrimination that makes gay and lesbian people second-class citizens in the country will soon end,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

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